

Creating Space: God in Our Midst

Week 5: Hospitality to the Neighbor

Welcome/Prayer

Reflection Question Did you extend hospitality to someone in church this week? How was it? Easy? Hard? Who was it that you extended hospitality to? What did you learn about the individual or family? What did you learn about yourself and family as you extended or even received hospitality?

Discussion

Two quotes that has changed my outlook on hospitality:

“Hospitality has us seeing people as Jesus sees them and seeing Jesus in the people God brings before us.”

“People offer themselves to Christ by offering Christ to others.”

We see in scripture that hospitality to the neighbor is a command. This command from God is there to remind us of who we were and also who you are.

Scripture: Genesis 18:2-8; Matthew 25:31-40; Deuteronomy 24:17-22

- Think back to offering hospitality to one another in the church. Why is it important that the church should be hospitable to one another?
- How does this hospitality reflect toward strangers that meet our church for the first time? How might our experiences with one another in the church aid us as outsiders come into the church?
- Who are neighbors in our community? What keeps them just “neighbors”?
- What did Abraham do when he encountered the 3 strangers under the oaks?
 - Why did he react the way that he did? (Remember: Abraham did not know who the strangers were at the time.)
 - How can we apply how Abraham reacted to our lives today?
- Who does Jesus connect the neighbor to in Matthew 25?
 - What is the implication of this connection on our lives and church?
 - Has there ever been a time when you were the “least of these”? How did this feel? Did someone or community welcome you in with openness?
- Is welcoming the stranger easy for you to do? Why is it so easy for you?
 - What are the things that get in the way of us creating space for the neighbor to feel welcomed and loved?
 - How can we change this?
- Who are the people around you in need of connection and welcoming? Are there small steps you can take to encourage and enhance this relationship? **(This is a rhetorical question to help launch into the Take it With You Section)**

Take it With You Question

This week may be harder than some of the other one recently. This week be open to the strangers around you (The people you work with, the neighbors in your community, the families who your children play sports with). Find a way to be hospitable and open to the people around you, be creative. Maybe you can go to dinner with them, spend a lunch hour

with them, or even have them over to your house for dinner. Make an effort to welcome the stranger into your midst and **get to know their story.**

Closing:

Final Prayer